

Washington, D.C. – Today, Congressman Joe Sestak voted in favor of H.R. 6052, the Saving Energy Through Public Transportation Act of 2008. This bill aims to reduce the United States' dependence on foreign oil by providing greater funding for and access to public mass transit. The measure passed by a vote of 322 – 98. — “The demand for oil to fuel our automobiles, cool our houses, and run our factories and our farms has never been higher than it is today, a fact that makes rapidly escalating gas prices even more challenging for our economy,” said Congressman Sestak. “To conserve both the money in our wallets and our natural resources, we should make a concerted effort to enhance our public transportation system. The Saving Energy Through Public Transportation Act does just this, by seeking to reduce public transit fares while providing mass transit authorities with grants to expand services and purchase alternative fuel for various forms of mass transit.”

According to the American Public Transit Association, diesel fuel costs are up more than 40 percent, and almost half of bus operators and more than two-thirds of rail operators have increased travel fares for their passengers. At the same time, some 20 percent are cutting down on their services.

To address this situation, this bill authorizes \$1.7 billion in capital and operating funds for transit agencies to both reduce fares and expand their services. It also increases the federal share for clean fuel and alternative fuel buses, ferries and locomotive-relative equipment from 90 to 100 percent. In addition, The Saving Energy Through Public Transportation Act of 2008 extends transit benefits to all federal employees by establishing a nationwide federal transit pass benefits program.

Furthermore, it increases the Federal share of grants for construction of additional parking facilities at the end of subway lines from 80 to 100 percent to cover the number of new mass transit riders that this bill aims to produce.

Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from

Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the Congress.

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